



ELECTION FOCUS 2008



October 31, 2008

No. 19

*** 3 Days until Election Day (Nov. 4) ***

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Latest News

In the days remaining until Election Day, both candidates are campaigning across the country, especially eager to win support from voters in key battleground states. Here is a summary of their recent campaign activities – **October 30, 2008**



[Road to the White House: Barack Obama](#)

[Road to the White House: John McCain](#)

Left: Barack Obama speaks at a rally at the University of New Mexico in Albuquerque on October 25.



Right: John McCain greets supporters in Hershey, Pennsylvania, October 28

[How the Media “Call” the U.S. Presidential Election](#) (10-30-2008)

A state's election results are not official until all votes are counted and the outcome certified by a state official, usually the day after the election. However, American news organizations invest substantial resources to “call” states as soon as possible after the polls close. For more [information on exit polling and the NEP](#), visit the Web site created by Edison Media Research and Mitofsky International.

[International Leaders Monitor U.S. Presidential Election](#) (10-30-2008)

The world is paying close attention to the U.S. election. As part of the State Department's Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI), 44 female political leaders from the Middle East and North Africa have been in the United States since October 14 learning firsthand how presidential politics work.

[US Candidates, Voters Remain Focused on the Economy](#) (10-30-2008)

For most U.S. voters, the future of the U.S. economy and their taxes is a critical issue in 2008, but the rhetoric flying in the final days of the campaign might be confusing voters rather than enlightening them. America.gov looks at the candidates' tax proposals. ...

[Population Changes Likely to Influence US Election](#) (10-29-2008)

The U.S. electorate is younger, better educated and more diverse than when the nation first elected President Bush in 2000, and that will affect the 2008 election and the future political landscape, analysts say. Some changes are likely to favor the Democrats, while others could help the Republicans. ...

[Asian Americans Important Voter Group in Election Swing States](#) (10-29-2008)

A sizable percentage of Asian-American voters remain uncommitted to either U.S. presidential candidate and could play a pivotal role in the 2008 election, according to political analysts. A recent multilingual survey found more than one-third had not yet decided on a candidate. ...

[Electronic Voting Technology Has Not Won Trust of US Voters](#) (10-28-2008)

Some U.S. jurisdictions are backing away from using electronic voting systems even as many other democracies are adopting them. Analysts who decry this development also agree that techniques to assure the integrity of elections must be improved to gain public confidence in the high-tech systems. ...

Daily updated information is available at a special **U.S. Elections** page at:
<http://usplitics.america.gov/uspolitics/elections/>

Blogs at America.gov **CAMPAIGN TRAIL TALK**



<http://blogs.america.gov/campaign/>

Provides running commentary and information on the 2008 elections in the United States. This blog keeps readers up to date on news, rumors and political chatter surrounding thousands of political races. Readers may ask questions about the electoral process, post their comments about the candidates, and generally guide the discussion.

Michelle Austein keeps you up to date on the candidates, issues and quirky happenings in the 2008 campaign, the third national election cycle she's covered. [Full Biography](#)

From the blog:

[Barack Obama airs 30-minute "infomercial"](#) — 30 October 2008

[Astronauts vote from space](#) — 29 October 2008

[Battleground Pennsylvania](#) — 28 October 2008

[Which candidate would be better for Africa?](#) — 27 October 2008

[Surprising 2008 battlegrounds](#) — 24 October 2008

Planning your election watch schedule?

2008 Poll Closing Times

David Leip's Atlas of U.S. Presidential Elections

<http://www.uselectionatlas.org/INFORMATION/ARTICLES/ElectionNight2008/pe2008elecnighttime.php>

POLLS

All national polls continue to show Barack Obama leading John McCain in the race for the White House. The size of Obama's lead, however, continues to vary in the different national surveys.

The [Gallup](#) daily presidential tracking poll of 2,800 registered voters taken October 27-29 has two likely voter models – one (based on past voting behavior and current intention to vote) shows Obama leading McCain **50%-45%**, while the second (based on current intention to vote) shows Obama up **51%-44%**.

The [Rasmussen Reports](#) daily presidential tracking poll for October 30 shows Obama leading McCain **51%-46%**, a gain of two points for Obama from yesterday.

A [Fox News](#) /Opinion Dynamics poll of 924 likely voters taken October 28-29 shows Obama leading McCain **47%-44%**.

The [GWU/Battleground](#) poll of 1,000 likely voters taken October 23 and October 26-29 shows Obama leading McCain **49%-46%**, remaining steady for the last five days.

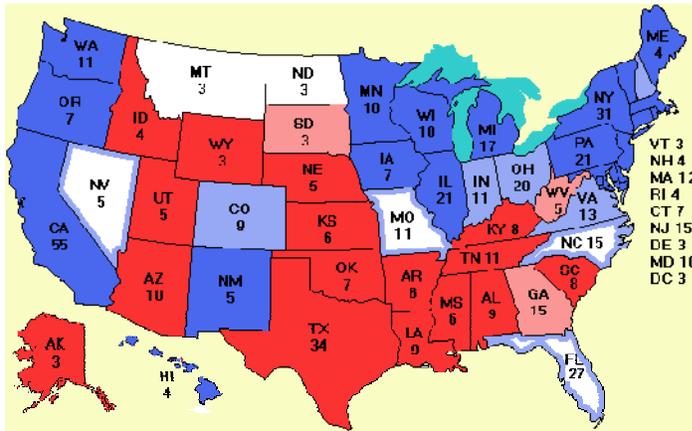
The [IBD](#) /TIPP daily presidential tracking poll of 871 likely voters taken October 25-29 shows Obama leading McCain **48%-44%**.

The [C-Span/Zogby](#) daily presidential tracking poll of 1,201 likely voters taken October 28-30 shows Obama leading McCain **50%-43%**.

The [ABC News](#) /[Washington Post](#) daily presidential tracking poll of 1,327 likely voters taken October 26-29 shows Obama leading McCain **52%-44%**.

A [CBS News/NYTimes](#) poll of 1005 likely voters taken October 25-29 gives Obama his largest lead, **52%-41%**.

VOTE PREDICTOR



- Strong Dem (254)
- Weak Dem (57)
- Barely Dem (64)
- Exactly tied (6)
- Barely GOP (15)
- Weak GOP (24)
- Strong GOP (118)

270 Electoral votes needed to win

[Map algorithm explained](#)

“

Today (October 30, 2008)
Obama 375 McCain 157 Ties 6

This day in 2004 (October 30, 2004)
Kerry 243 Bush 280

CAMPAIGN 2008



[Security Should Be the Deciding Issue.](#)

By Frederick W. Kagan. American Enterprise Institute, October 31, 2008

As the scale of the economic crisis becomes clear and comparisons to the Great Depression of the 1930s are tossed around, there is a very real danger that America could succumb to the feeling that we no longer have the luxury of worrying about distant lands, now that we are confronted with a "real" problem that actually affects the lives of all Americans.

[Taxes under Obama and McCain.](#)

By William G. Gale and Benjamin H. Harris. The Brookings Institution October 30, 2008.

William Gale and Benjamin Harris discuss the tax proposals set forth by the presidential candidates Barack Obama and John McCain.

[The Element of Surprise.](#) Pew Research Center, October 30, 2008.

As recently as a month ago, this analyst and the American public itself were throwing up our hands and saying we can't figure this one out -- too many intangibles. No more.

[Palin Fatigue Now Rivals Obama Fatigue.](#) SNL Appearance, Wardrobe Flap Register Widely.

Pew Research Center, October 30, 2008. Sarah Palin's new wardrobe caught the public's eye but media coverage focused far more on the presidential candidates. Still, more Americans say they've been hearing too much about Palin than say they've heard too much about Obama.

More from the Pew Research Center (PewResearch.org)

[Democrats Hold Party ID Edge Across Political Battleground](#) - 30 Oct 08

[The Color Of News: How Different Media Have Covered the General Election](#) - 29 Oct 08

[Among Florida's Hispanics, Voter Registration Swings Democratic](#) - 29 Oct 08

[Swing States Sway Campaign Media](#) - 28 Oct 08

[Cato's 2008 Election Coverage.](#) Cato Institute, October 30, 2008

From the economy to global warming, from the energy debate to US foreign policy, the 2008 election has given CATO analysts and experts plenty to talk and write about. They pull together all the op-eds, podcasts, reports, and publications our scholars have done comparing the two candidates on their respective platforms, so all these resources can exist in one place.

ARTICLE ALERT

7 THINGS THAT COULD GO WRONG ON ELECTION DAY. By Michael Scherer. *Time*, Nov 3, 2008. Vol. 172, Iss. 18; pg. 40

With just days until the election, the scale of the database-purge problem is unknown. Millions have been stripped from voter rolls in key states, but the legitimacy of those eliminations remains unclear. The sheer volume of state voter checks against the federal Social Security Administration database, however, has raised concerns. Six states that are heavily using the federal database were recently warned by Social Security commissioner Michael Astrue about the danger of improperly blocking legitimate voters. "It is absolutely essential that people entitled to register to vote are allowed to do so," he said in October.

[FULL TEXT](#)

TWO KINDS OF CHANGE; COMPARING THE CANDIDATES ON FOREIGN POLICY. By Justin Logan, *Policy Analysis*, No. 623, October 14, 2008, 24pages.

Few U.S. presidential elections have been decided on the basis of foreign policy. For the first time in decades, however, both parties have fielded candidates who have chosen to emphasize their foreign policy views....Republican John McCain, with his long stint in national politics, has attempted to frame the foreign policy issue around the question of experience. But evaluating McCain's foreign policy positions reveals a candidate consistently dedicated to confrontation, threats, and the use of military power. Democrat Barack Obama, a new face on the national scene, has chosen to emphasize the need for change in the way in which U.S. foreign policy is conducted. Obama has called for more focus on diplomacy, less on military action, and an end to the "politics of fear." However, an examination of Obama's advisers and policy ideas makes it clear that Obama is anything but a noninterventionist. [FULL TEXT](#)

Plus - [Google News](#) as well as [Yahoo News](#) on **Elections** updated continuously

UPCOMING EVENTS



Elections Night Live! America.gov webchat

Leading pundits and political experts will be online all night to answer questions and provide updates on the latest election news. In addition to the list of scheduled speakers below, we will feature additional speakers as they become available throughout the evening. We will also invite participants to submit their thoughts and comments.

21:00 GMT Jerry Hagstrom, Senior Editor, *National Journal*

23:00 GMT John Fortier, Research Fellow, American Enterprise Institute

02:00 GMT John Zogby, Zogby International

04:00 GMT Ann Stone, President, The Stone Group

07:00 GMT Edward McMahon, Associate Professor, Univ. of Vermont

09:00 GMT Thomas Schaller, Associate Professor, Univ. of Maryland

16:00 GMT State Reps. Susanna Mendoza (D-IL) & David Rivera (R-FL)

This webchat will take place at <http://statedept.connectsolutions.com/elections08>

No registration is needed. Simply choose "Enter as a Guest," and join the discussion.

Date: November 4- 5, Starting at 20:00 GMT and providing coverage throughout the night.

REMINDER: Please join us November 4 from 9:00 pm until November 5 at 9:00 am at **Carlton Hotel in Bratislava** for **U.S. Embassy – AmCham Elections Watch Party !**

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